

NO AUG

NEW ORLEANS ATARI USERS' GROUP

NOAUG News

Volume 4, Number 6/7

June/July 1987



The Last "The Last Word?" Sec's News A Word Puzzle NX-10 Printer
High Roller Daisy Dot and Font Master Millionaire

The Last Word?

RELIEF & REGRETS

Well, this is it, my last "The Last Word?". I approach this last column with both relief and regrets. Yes, relief that my year as Newsletter Editor is at its end; but, regrets for all the things that could have been. I am relieved that we made some progress with increasing the quality of the newsletter this year; but I regret that we were unable to take the newsletter to the level I had envisioned at the beginning of my term. It turns out that it takes more than a powerful computer and the right software to turn out a quality newsletter; it also takes a lot of time and talent from the people working on the newsletter. I am relieved that we had the contributions of several very talented people (I'll mention them more specifically a little later); but I regret that my talents for this newsletter publishing task are not greater. Last, but certainly not least, I regret that I was unable to get more of the club (that's the rest of you guys who didn't contribute!) involved in producing the newsletter.

THANKS!

I would like to extend a special thanks to those who have contributed to the newsletter this past year. Without the regular contributions of Todd Petit and Denise Holzhauser there wouldn't have been much for anyone to read in the NOAUG News. These two contributors were even more consistent at providing articles than I was, and I was the editor! Close behind these two were our leader, Dave Porter, and our VP, Karl Belson. If I had been a little more persistent in asking them for input, I suspect they would have provided many more insights into the world of our Atari's. There were several other members who contributed at some time during the year, and I hope I don't leave any of them out; thanks to Chuck Chaffey, Mike Aucoin and Tony Friedman. If I left anyone out, I'm sorry; I did appreciate your input. Thanks again to all of our contributors!

FUTURE OF NOAUG

I know, from all the talk I hear, that there is some concern about NOAUG's future. It appears from reading the exchange newsletters, that other Users Groups are also experiencing many of the same problems we are here in New Orleans. I have heard some people express the opinion that unless we do a better job of supporting the ST, NOAUG will eventually die. While I definitely would like to see us add more ST support in our meetings (since I own one), we are going to have a tough time gaining new ST members now that an ST Users Group is starting up here in town. Does this mean that NOAUG is dead already? I should hope not! Another member said that without the ST users, NOAUG will die when Atari drops the

8-bit line in a couple of years. I disagree with that prediction. If you look in the back of Computer Shopper you'll find that there are many TI99/4A and Adam User's Groups still in existence years after these computers went out of production. Actually, in my opinion, when a company drops a computer from its product line, the User's Group becomes even more important. If the company no longer supports the computer, software companies will stop supporting the computer (wait a minute, I have this feeling that I've been here before; did the software companies jump the gun on the 8-bit, or what?) and people will need a User's Group even more. If there is no new commercial software, people will need to search out the User's Groups in order to gain access to the new Public Domain software which WILL continue to be available. Sure, NOAUG has some tough questions to answer; but if we don't give up, and if we put forth the effort, I think NOAUG has a good future.

PIRACY

One problem that the Atari community must deal with is Piracy. Personally, I have never seen any evidence that makes me believe the claims that "Atari users are the worst pirates of all." However, the people who are making this claim are the software companies who could support the 8-bit. If the Atari community, NOAUG included, cannot convince the software companies that their support is warranted; that

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SEC'S NEWS

by Denise Holshauer



Well, I hope everybody is enjoying their summer but don't forget about NOAUG. At the June 2 meeting things were quite busy we had officers elections and then afterwards we broke up into Sigs. The election results are as follows:

Board:

President Dave Porter
Vice-President Buddy Freeman
Secretary Denise Holshauer
Treasurer Roy D'Arcangelo

Cabinet:

Rec. Secretary Clarence Maquin
Editor Todd Pettit
Librarian Cairi Spiers

There will be other appointed positions of which the new officers will address soon. The first Sig nite went well. Some of the Sigs were Beginners Sig, Data Processing Sig, and Hardware Sig. Each sig had a Sig-op. We will be breaking up into Sigs on July 7 after taking care of business and reports. At our June 16 after taking care of business, we had a panel discussion "Of which Dos is best." Dave represented Smart Dos, Karl represented Sparta Dos, and Chuck represented My Dos. The discussion was quite intense and if you missed this meeting you missed a good one. The debate ended with all agreeing that Sparta is a very versatile Dos and Smart Dos an easy to use Dos.

NOAUG meeting dates for the next few months are as follows:

July 7 July 21
Aug. 4 Aug. 18
Sept. 1 Sept. 15

Remember the first Tuesday we meet at Livaudais for 7pm and the third Tuesday we meet at Saint Mary Magdalen School at 7pm. Also anyone interested in reading some of the exchange newsletters please see me either before or after the meeting. The officers would like to know if you would like to see a peice of software demoed or do one yourself. Also if you have suggestions of something we could do at a meeting please let us know.

Darek Mibocka's Atari 800 emulator will be released with Atari's approval according to J. Nagy of Michigan Atari Magazine. In a public message on Genie Atari Sig the spokesman for Atari, Neil Harris, will allow both use and distribution of the Atari code within the emulator. However, Atari wants Darek to allow the publishing of the source code for his emulator. The purpose being that with other programmers efforts the chance of a truly versatile, full-speed emulator becomes greater. Darek will still have rights to his work. It seems that Atari does not want any

restrictions on distribution. Darek has been working on the project and has added sound, GTIA graphics, DOS menus, Joystick control, and Player missile graphics. Another programmer completed the player-missile routines and donated them. Improvements on speed continue.

Don Kovacs who is the editor of the popular on line magazine ZNAG may no longer be using Compuserve in his distribution to over 200 Atari BBS's worldwide. It seems that the sysops over the Atari Sig on CIS objected to some items in the magazine. The Atari Sig manager is apologizing to Mr. Kovacs and offering him a reason to stay. ZNAG is a free weekly online magazine and continues on Genie, Delphi and other services. (info. from Michigan Atari Magazine J. Nagy)

As many of you know by now that Atari and Commodore have settled their suit. However, according to an article in the April 20, 1987 ZNAG neither company is permitted to disclose or discuss details of the agreement as it is a condition of the settlement. Although ZNAG stated that informed sources hinted that Atari may be receiving payments. However, neither company said that Atari would be receiving money from Commodore so we will have to wait and see.

Anyone owning a 1050 disk drive that has an ICD doubler in it should read this paragraph before getting Autoduel from Origin Systems. Indus drives owners should be careful too. It appears Autoduel has an incompatibility with these drives. Upon boot up all you see is the title screen repeatedly. Since other Origin System software work fine one would think they put in a new type of copy protection. So until a version appears that won't give these drives problems and you use these drives perhaps you should pass on purchasing Autoduel for now. (from ZNAG).

Well fellow Atarians that is it for this month. Till August have a safe and happy fourth of July.

(Continued from page 2...)

their products will make them some money from the Atari 8-bit line, then we may indeed have a very serious problem. If there is no new software, people won't buy the computer. If people won't buy the computer, the company will stop building the computer. I realize that some people don't want to face this fact, but it seems obvious enough to me.

FAREWELL...

While I am saying farewell as Newsletter Editor, you won't be rid of me just yet! I'll still be around, as much as time permits, anyway. I still intend to support the newsletter, as a contributor again, and I urge you (again!) to help support it also. Write an article!

Steve Matlock

Common Computer Terms

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. P C E F S C I D T H M S M O A Y A Y D C A L S X B S Y R X Y K W I L A T D A .

. A A M T I R A R O C O D B I C S B O A X E A T A M S O M E S U S S T M B Y I .

. C T A E M C X N C N M M R D C R U G R R H C W A L D B X S N J R L S T C R S .

. S A R T G I O B A R A C R M L P G L O T L E N B B I A O K A R R O A A L M T .

. T A L T P A N P A R B N I X E E G B T M M E O Y P J D A C K A A M T Y D R U .

. Y T X T S A B U T B E C T O E R L I I L R I N T Z G A K C I S O W L R H R E .

. A E S O B H N Y A T Y A I E P C X B N R Y S S H T O T K C S O I B B P T K P .

. Y E A O N R O P T I S O C I O O N A O S T E R O S R R Z E N P M D P T E P P .

. T H N A P Y A M L E T R A M S M R I M H M T B R A U P K M S E O L M U C Y R .

. Y S E C O A M I R A I C S R O G R P C R O E L M U L B I T S A T O M A L R I .

. L D E A C S M R M O U E P L A Y E R M I S S I L E S S N S R I B S L C R A N .

. L A E S I E U T X M V G A S O T C X S P A E T T L T E A A R I T A O E D N T .

. K E A L C O A R O I S T A R T E S U T D L D T S E S E T R L E L A T B R I E .

. I R E X S I I I R T R P X K U G L T S M A W E O R S X G X T O M O R A L B R .

. E P E X A A T D O M R A R O I T L E O I N T R G E T A R S R I N S G L D O L .

. E S W U C L K I K M M P T T B T A I G S A R C B R O A I W C C O X S Y O M I .

. K I A P M S M O C O F N I I A S T I A D E O H S D A R N A O F E E Y R N K I .

. A I D G I U D T T T A N I E X S P O M S A O I E M A I T M T A E R L A P U P .

. X A D D S A B O S O R A M A S H A X T T B U P G T S O O W B O R A P S E U O .

. E S S E N I S U B N O A P T U S D P E I D T N A R M K A T G A X A B R M B A .

. T M S E G X P O T T U L L M R M A A S C K F S R R E R T T R S E L I F R E R .

. N A I A E P Y A E R A O S E K A E O E T O E S T T E O C A T N M S T E G S I .

. K N M F I E R N G P G B I S P N M A O M T K E Y B O A R D L U O E S M U S E .

. U J O Z K T S A S I R A E M R R C S E U S A E O E V T F A R U D R K M R R N .

. O M I O E N G L O A M O A A S R M M P U M C G U C W O T T N A A T W D S P T .

. F I P S G E R O T S N S M S P E I M S M E N A N A K S B D L O S U H M L M U .

. R R C T O A C G M T S T I E L E O S M G L P R K T M C U T C T A T A R M M U .

. N S N I L M F P A O T R I O S C C M L S E E U R G S I T M B T E S O T G U I .

. A O C I S U M S U A G R S C D X O H I X O B O T H A H R L S D C A D G A D S .

. U T O M Y A D T D O T M G E A G M I E E S I O B R S P A M E T O G A S M M T .

. S R O M O D B C O L O R S E M C P T P R A T A R I M A A O M R S L O H E C N .

. R T Y A S O M C R T R N A A G T U I O I R A J E T O R N S G O S X E S S O N .

. R M S I U Y K M H A R D W A R E T M U B S C S S T O G M R O P O B O T C N T .

. T I E E R S L I I R T M T C O O E N R S D N A M C A P E C A S O A R Z T P D .

. I D B O A D O H R S A I A T P A R M C S P C P O S D O D O P T A P A N O L N .

. A T M M S S L N M O S S R E D I A R R A T S E S T O C O O A R T T R B S A O .

. Z E M C L I X M K H H E M I B O U X S T P B R N S F R M I E S E S D T L T S .

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Star Micronics NX-10 Printer

By Randy Hefner
Hickory Atari
Computer Enthusiasts
Post Office Box 12
Hickory, NC 28603

After years of "not-so-great" printers like the Alphacom 81, the Atari 1020, and the Atari 1025 and the envy of my friends Star SG-10, I finally decided to get a high quality printer.

But which printer would I buy? There are several good printers on the market now and some at very good prices. I studied the new Atari XM printers. Both have good speed, graphics, good looks, and a great price. The one thing that worried me about the new Atari printers was compatibility. The Print Shop now on the market will not work with them.

Next I considered the Panasonic printers. I have heard alot of good things about them, but, I had the compatibility problems again.

What I needed was a printer with a good near letter quality and Epson compatible. The Epsoms were out of the question as I had to spend less than \$300.

I finally found the printer that meets all of my needs. The Star Micronics NX-10.

The Star line of printers have a very good reputation starting with the Star SG-10 and its predecessor, the Gemini 10-X. I felt I could trust a Star printer for quality at a good price.

I purchased the NX-10 from the local computer dealer, Specialty Cash Register, and hurried home. The first thing I noticed was the extreme care the manufacturer took to package their product. In a small white box contains the manual, paper guide, ribbon, and quick reference guide. The platen knob was "hidden" in the styro-foam spacers.

The manual has a laminated full color cover which has a fold out flap to protect the pages. It is very thorough and simple to understand. The only thing I didn't like about the manual is that there is no trouble-shooting guide.

Something I have never seen with a printer before is the quick reference guide and a reference sticker to be placed on the front of the printer. These items tell most of the functions available from the front panel.

The front panel has a series of buttons that lets you select most any functions without messing with DIP switches. This is very handy because the DIP switches are not easy to

get to. They are under a plastic flap under the ribbon.

The paper guide may be placed into the platen to create a ramp guide for single sheet feeding. There is also an optional bulk single sheet feeder available from Star. Business may find this printer to be an inexpensive alternative to the high dollar printers. With the bulk feeder the business may use their own letterhead and the near letter quality mode to write letters.

The near letter quality mode was the best I have ever seen on any dot matrix printer. It is even better than the older SG-10. The printer also has italics and a special IBM character set for the IBM users. There are also many other fonts and pitches available.

There is an automatic paper loading feature which will make loading single sheets or tractor paper a breeze! The tractor is behind the platen which keeps you from wasting the first sheet of fanfold paper.

The NX-10 user a ribbon cartridge instead of the two spool ribbons that Gemini 10-X and SG-10 users are used to. The cartridge is very convenient, but is also very expensive! The ribbon for the SG-10 runs around 2 or 3 dollars. The cartridge for the NX-10 is \$12.95! An alternative to replacing the entire cartridge is to get what they call a "zip pack." A zip pack is a ribbon without the cartridge which you must install into the empty cartridge. This task is dirty and a small pain, but worth the savings. A zip pack will run around 3-4 dollars.

Star says the print head will last 100,000,000 characters before needing replacing. The print head is user replaceable and would be very easy to perform by anyone.

Everything considered, I think I made the right decision on my first "real" printer. The NX-10 sells for around \$300, but you can find it for a little less.

This article was submitted to the NOAUG News by the author. The author is the Assistant Editor of the Hickory Atari Computer Enthusiasts (H.A.C.E.) News.

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CURRENT NOTES**JUNE 1987****DAISY DOT and FONT MASTER****Two Public Domain Winners for the 8-bit Ataris**

Review by John Godbey

One undeniable fact about the Atari 8-bit computer is that the supply of new innovative commercial programs is drying up. But this does not mean that there is no new worthwhile software for these computers — a number of interesting products are entering the public domain. These programs, however, often remain "hidden" from users: they are neither advertised nor reviewed in magazines which Atari users depend upon for Atari news. Even a program as superb as *Turbo Basic* has not even been mentioned in *ANALOG*, and just mentioned in the June 87 *ANTIC* (but see *CURRENT NOTES*, February 1987, p. 26).

In this note I want to describe two worthwhile products for 8-bit Ataris which are available free, and are as well done as many expensive commercial programs: "Daisy-Dot" and "Font Master" both of which are available on various BBS.

DAISY-DOT

"Daisy-Dot" is a program that will make an ordinary Epson or Star printer produce near letter quality (NLQ) printing. It is a compiled Turbo Basic program written by Roy Goldman of Denver, CO. Even though it was written in Turbo Basic, it is a stand alone program; however, because it was written in Turbo Basic, it will only run on the -XL and -XE computers.

The program is quite simple to use. Take any file and "print" it to a disk — for example, with AtariWriter Plus or PaperClip. Load Daisy-Dot and the font you desire and the program will print the file in either standard, condensed, or double-size print. The program prints a line, advances the page slightly, and prints it again. The results I get on my Epson RX-80 printer are amazing. The letters no longer look like a bunch of dots, nor do they look wide and smeared as in the normal double-strike mode. They look nearly as good as a typewriter.

Simply put, this is a program that delivers on its promise. It takes an ordinary Atari and an ordinary printer and produces NLQ printouts. If you need NLQ print, then get this program.

(As an added bonus the disk comes with a font editor to allow creation of new NLQ fonts. I haven't tested it extensively, but it seems satisfactory for the job.)

FONT MASTER

"Font Master" is another printer utility for the 8-bit Atari. It was written by Mike Fulton of Cypress, CA, in Action! It is a stand alone program that will run on all 8-bit Ataris with at least 48k memory.

The "Font Master" Disk has three parts. The first is a program that will print out files, including graphics characters, along the lines of "MegaFont." If you don't have a program which does this, this one certainly has the right price. The second part — at least on the version I downloaded from CompuServe — is 35 different fonts which can be used for the print outs. I haven't tried them all, but they seem to encompass the standard varieties of fonts.

The final part — and to me by far the most interesting and useful — is a part of the program called "Sideways" which allows you to print out SynCalc files, as you might guess, sideways. (It should also work on Visicalc, but I haven't tested that.) The SynCalc file must be saved with the Text option. The program will then print it out, sideways, as long as the total file size does not exceed 18,000 characters, and over 40 lines vertically. There is no limit to the width of the file as long as it doesn't exceed the total character limitation. That is, you could have a spread sheet that was 6,000 lines wide as long as it was only 3 lines deep, and this program would print it.

According to the documentation, this program works with Epson compatibles and "Star Micronics Gemini series printers." I have only tried it on the Epson, and can report that on that printer it works as advertised. This is certainly not a program which you will use every day; but if you do many spread sheets, you will sooner or later need to print out a wide one, and when that time comes this is the program that will save your life.

If you need these kinds of printer utilities, I highly recommend these programs. They do their job, and they do it efficiently. They are both shareware programs — the authors ask for a donation if you like them. Both can be gotten from DL3 on CompuServe, but I warn you, they are long programs. Look for them on a "free" BBS. Perhaps they will soon be in your club library.

Reprinted from:

CURRENT NOTES**JUNE 1987**

HIGH ROLLER

Review by Roger Abram

Last month we had a look at *Harrier Strike Mission* (HSM) by Miles Computing, a game involving the Harrier Jump Jet where you took off from the deck of a carrier, flew straight for a few miles to attack the enemy on an island, and then returned to the aircraft carrier for a cup of coffee while you waited for new orders. All pretty straightforward and simple.

Well, your new orders have arrived. If you thought your next assignment was going to be as uncluttered as the one in HSM, think again. This time your mission is to fly 500 miles through enemy territory and destroy their headquarters. This is no easy task considering that in the operational area there are 3,000 mountains, 3,500 SAM sites, over 1,000 tanks, and an unknown number of enemy aircraft waiting to pounce on you. Since you can't make it to the headquarters on your initial supply of fuel, you'll have to set up your own ground sites along the way to rearm and refuel your jet. Who could blame you if you told the commanding officers that you had the flu and had to stay in bed?

High Roller, by Mindscape, Inc., is another Harrier combat simulation game for the Atari ST. Two of the items that I found lacking in HSM (graphics and overall scenario) are not factors in this program. Graphics are top notch and the many steps and situations you experience on your flight add depth to the game.

You must first learn how to handle your jet. The program comes with a practice mode where you can learn to get the plane off the ground (no easy feat at first) and then switch back and forth from horizontal, vertical, or 45 degree thrust. Each change will result in you having to make adjustments in speed and pitch. Since landing and establishing new ground sites is an integral part of the game, it's best to learn these procedures first before starting off on your mission.

Also included is a combat practice mode. Here you start off airborne at 10,000+ feet in pursuit of several enemy aircraft. Although this is called a "combat practice" mode, be forewarned, the enemy planes fire back at you! You'll return to this mode several times before you successfully learn how to evade one of their missiles. Once you know a missile has been launched you can turn towards it and make a drastic change in heading at the last second. Another option is to use a flare or chaff pack (you get nine of each). Unlike some other simulators, timing is extremely crucial in using a flare. It has to be dropped at the last possible moment before the missile reaches you. Getting hit by a missile ends the game and is the most frequent cause for having to start over.

The Harrier jet you're piloting is a combination of different types of aircraft used today. It is also equipped with FOFTRAC (Friend Or Foe Tracking Radar) which is unique to *High Roller*. FOFTRAC is a radar display covering approximately 24 miles by 12 miles of your immediate area. It shows all mountains, ground sites, SAM sites, tank and aircraft movements, missiles in flight, and your flight path. There's only one hitch — in order to get FOFTRAC to display information on any new area your plane moves into, you must first climb to 16,000 feet so that your wing cameras can photograph the area. Of course, when you climb above the clouds you're usually not alone.

In addition to the FOFTRAC display, there are many other indicators in front of you on the cockpit. Fuel indicator, compass, altitude, vertical speed, air speed, pitch, thrust vector, thrust level, landing gear status, flaps, brakes, and damage indicator need to be monitored. An additional air attack radar informs of the position of enemy aircraft within a radius of five miles and 5,000 feet above or below you. There are also warning signals when one (or more) of your four ground sites come under attack.

After you've had enough of the practice modes, there are three levels of difficulty under which your mission can be flown: Pilot, Commander, and Ace. Pilot is the basic level and the latter two require greater accuracy in using your weapons and more careful control of your jet when diving or climbing. Climb too quickly and you'll black out as the blood rushes away from your head. Dive too steeply and you'll red out as the opposite effect happens.

I've been playing this game on and off for a couple of weeks and I wish I could report that I've made it to the enemy's headquarters and unleashed my bombs on it. I haven't. Truth is, I've only had nominal success in establishing new ground sites halfway to the headquarters. I don't even know what I'll find or if the effort will be worth it once I do get there.

If you decide to purchase *High Roller* be prepared: the program requires a lot of practice and investment of your time. However, the superb graphics and fun in flying the jet overcomes any initial frustration as you learn the mechanics of the game. My only real gripe with this otherwise fine game is the lack of a save feature when you decide to quit in the middle of a mission.

High Roller is available from Mindscape, Inc., 3444 Dundee Road, Northbrook, IL, 60062, (312) 480-7667. The list price is \$49.95.

Reprinted from the May 1987 issue of the Michigan Atari
Computer Enthusiasts (NACE) Newsletter.

MILLIONAIRE

A review by
Gordon Totty

Hi! Remember me? I'm the person that paraded his/her lack of investing skills by admitting that he wouldn't have paid \$11.50 a share for Atari stock, which the last time I looked was selling for over DOUBLE that figure. (I must face it; Tramiel knows more than me and he'll always be richer.) Well, I'm back to tell you about my latest software acquisition, which has saved me from myself. I am now a stock market wizard, first class. Why, just tonight I made over \$25,000 in a few simulated weeks in the simulated market! Soon, on paper, make that on disk, I will be rich beyond the wildest dreams of the Pharaohs. My self-esteem has been made whole again. All this thanks to Blue Chip Software!

Unfortunately, I have only seen Millionaire advertised for sale in mail order listings, and that is how I bought it. With apologies to those merchants who advertise in our Journal, I will not allow a merchant to order something for me. If it must be ordered, I believe I might as well do it myself. I do not order by mail for the small price advantage. I prefer to buy from a local software vendor, and Basic Bits 'n Bytes and Canton Computer have received a lot of money from me, as well as Sector One International. I live nearest to Canton Computer and spent so much there that Basic Bits 'n Bytes merged with them just to get my extra business. When I have decided I want a product, and I have the money, I want it NOW!!! (No need to point out to me that this is immature; I know it is.) If it is on the shelf, I'll take it. If you have to order it for me, I believe I can do it faster myself, and don't want the extra delay. Sorry, because I would really rather see it on local shelves.

Blue Chip Software is published by Britannica Learning Corporation. They publish five simulations that I know of:

Millionaire (stock market), Tycoon (commodities market), Baron (real estate), Squire (financial planning), and Managing for Success (business). Only Millionaire and Tycoon have been released for the Atari. List prices are around \$60 for IBM and Macintosh, \$50 for Apple II, \$30 for Commodore, and \$19.95 for us kids with the "toys". According to the sales literature, these programs were once reviewed very favorably by TIME magazine. I certainly am not about to disagree with TIME; I am enjoying the stock market simulation.

First, you may know about me and packaging. If not, I have previously reported that I am a sucker for a good package. That's what life is all about, you know, having a good wrapper. Substance with appearance is always worth a few bucks more than plain, old, white-box substance. The wrapper didn't hook me this time because I couldn't see it in the ads, but it was a pleasant surprise. About three quarters the size of a record album. Well padded plastic, with a grain appearance. Thick. Substantial. Solid black. Gold lettering. The instruction book has a shiny gold cover, with black lettering. Nice. Reminds one of money, somehow. Millionaire\$\$\$\$\$\$\$. Too bad the sub-title is "The Stock Market Simulation", and not "The Game of Rapacious Greed and Money Lust."

The first, and I believe only, unpleasant surprise comes when you boot the disk (with Basic installed). After you tell it that you are a new player, not seeking to reload a saved game, you get the most unusual announcement I have ever experienced. You get told that you will wait fourteen minutes for loading, setup, initialization, or whatever they called it. Let me share my first experience with this, just about the way it happened to me. Punching keys,

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waiting to see what's going to entertain me, hit return again, "Hold it! What did I just read? It couldn't have said 14 minutes, must have been 1.4!" Drive very busy. Wait. Drive churning away. Screen black. Wait. It's been over 1.4 minutes. Screen black. Wait. "Gordo, old boy, it have said 14 minutes. Who the hell ever heard of announcing one point four minutes. They would have said 'about a minute and a half' if that was the time." Silence. Screen black. Silence. Panic. "The damn disk is defective and has caused a lock up!!!" Silence. Silence. "What was that? My God, the screen has gone into the attract mode. What should I do, reboot?" Silence.

Wait, folks, wait. They really meant it. It took a full fourteen minutes to initialize! I propose a contest. I believe I have a world's record here; can anyone name a commercial software package for the Atari that tops it?

Now that you have been warned, should you buy this product allow for the fourteen minutes. You could boot the disk, go out for dinner, then play the game. Do anything except sit at the monitor and sweat, the way I did the first time.

Reloading a saved game is also slow, but much faster than fourteen minutes. I did not time it, but would describe the reload procedure as requiring a couple of minutes.

There is no graphic zip to this thing. It is business-like. No nonsense. White print on blue background. But it does not need colors, fancy fonts, pictures, sounds, etc. It works the way it is.

Here is what you do in Millionaire: Invest and/or speculate, starting with \$10,000. Your objective is to make a million dollars in the stock market.

Buy on margin at 18% interest.

Trade in options.

Borrow against your net worth.

Follow 15 stocks in five industry groups.

Evaluate financial news bulletins, and act on them as you judge proper.

Pay commissions. Pay taxes.

Start at week 14 and go to week 91, where the game ends if you have not terminated it earlier.

Study any of 21 different graphs of price movements over the simulated weeks.

Watch your net worth rise or fall and try to maximize your gains.

Read corporate histories for background (about one screen or less each).

View your portfolio and transaction reports.

Imagine yourself to be a Wall St. Wonder!

The instruction manual is brief and clear. The simulation sounds much more complicated than it really is. You will be using and enjoying it at your first sitting.

This game is marketed as educational software, and I have learned from it. Additionally, I am aware of at least one eighth grade class that would enjoy exposure to it and a chance to work with it for a while. Unfortunately for them, their classroom is equipped by Apple so I cannot help.

I can highly recommend Millionaire if you are interested in the stock market, particularly in view of its bargain price. Where else can you feel like a millionaire for less than twenty bucks?

If you have more patience than me you might even get one of our advertisers to order it for you.

Now, stop reading this drivel (that, indeed, is my literary style) and turn to Flying The ST, a regular column that I have been enjoying since the April 1986 issue. You are cleared for take off.

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